

## Psychosocial Nurturing of Children in Islam

Dr. Syed Abdul Ghaffar Bukhari\*

Dr. Muhammad Athar Hussain\*\*

### **ABSTRACT**

Psychosocial nurturing of children is linked with Parenting and personality development theories and child development theories too report evidences of influences of parenting on children nurturing. The purpose of this paper is to explore existing parenting styles in current literature and how these parenting styles influence upon and form the personality of the children in their early years. The paper aims to examine parenting with reference to authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting, permissive parenting and uninvolved parenting. It discussed the expectations and responsiveness of the parents which determine their behavior and style. Through parenting, psychosocial nurturing of the children is determined and it was explained in existing literature and analyzed in Islamic teachings. The study followed a critical interpretivist method which examined the literature and conducted content analysis. The study examines the parenting concept and parenting style in Islamic teachings. Islam lays special emphasis on communication and attitude of the parents towards their children particularly in early childhood. Parenting style in Islamic teaching displays a loving and guiding mode. It is less demanding and more responsive in early years. Parenting in Islamic teaching encourages developing tolerance, harmony and peace. It shows flexibility to accept children's dispositions and tries to discipline their inner faculties. Islamic teachings expect from parents to be responsive with love and passion. It gives children freedom to talk, walk, think and act in a carefree environment where they can become socially and emotionally strong. Parenting in Islam accepts children's interests and attitudes with positive responses and respects their rights with warmth and love. It particularly develops moral awareness so that children can distinguish between right and wrong and also understand that they need to abide by rules and regulations. Lastly literature also reports that parenting in Islam does not allow any sort of harassment, coercion, frightening and unjust environment for the little angels.

**Keywords:** *Parenting, Responsive Parenting, Parenting Styles, Parenting in Islam.*

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\* HoD& Associate Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, NUML, Islamabad

\*\* Assistant Professor, Early Childhood and Elementary Teacher Education Department, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad

## Introduction

Child's personality is immensely influenced by the environment in which the child is brought up. The family of the child plays a significant role in shaping the personality of the child. The family which gives trust, autonomy, support and freedom of dialogue and expression to its child, he shows confidence and enjoys good relationships with other children. On the other hand, a family environment which is quarrelsome and tense makes the child confused and nervous. The child undergoes behavioral problems and feels unsafe in the family and society. Child's present and future success depends on critical role the parents play. Parents also exert enormous influence on emotional health and development of the children<sup>(1)</sup>. Child's family, his home environment and social surroundings are important sources that affect his development<sup>(2)</sup>.

## Parenting

As compared to domain-appropriate parenting practices, parenting style is known as an international measure of parenting practices<sup>(3)</sup>. Previously parenting styles were known as "a group of attitudes which are directed towards and conveyed to the child and create an emotional environment to express the behaviors of parents"<sup>(4)</sup>. There are four main parenting styles that have been identified with two aspects including responsiveness and demandingness whereas parenting styles include being authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglecting<sup>(5)</sup>, <sup>(6)</sup>.

As a whole it can be reported that parenting is known as a process that helps in supporting and promoting social, intellectual, physical and emotional development of a child from infancy to adulthood.

## Parenting Styles

Parenting style is the way in which parents raise their children. Parenting styles are known as a way in which parents interact with children

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  - (2) Gupta, R. M., & Theus, F. C., *Pointers For parenting for mental health service professionals*, (England: John Wiley, London, 2006AD).
  - (3) Baumrind, D. "Rearing competent children" In W. Damon (Ed.), *Child development today and tomorrow* (CA: San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1989AD), 349–378
  - (4) Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. *Parenting style as context: An integrative model*. *Psychological Bulletin*, (1993AD), 113, 487–496
  - (5) Baumrind, D. "Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior" *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, 75, No.1, (1967AD), 43–88
  - (6) Maccoby, E. E., and, J. A. Martin., "Socialisation in the Context of the Family: Parent–Child Interaction." In *Handbook of Child Psychology*, (1983AD), Hetherington, E. M. *Socialisation, Personality, and Social Development*, (New York: Wiley, 1–102

and disciplined their children for social behavior<sup>(1)</sup> as well as and four parenting styles are also identified by the Louw and Louw which are authoritative Parent, Authoritarian Parent, Uninvolved Parent and Permissive Parent<sup>(2)</sup>.

The concept of parenting style is generally defined as the behavioral capabilities of parents for growing their children. Parenting style also depends on the level of parental control on the behavior of a child and also level of accepting a child<sup>(3)</sup>. Parenting styles are quite different from each other and depend on the extent to which parents set rules for children and also provide guidance for those rules. Parents also explain the rules to children and clarify the demands and expectations from them. Along these all they also have control and power over the children and give emotional support to them for better social development. It is known that authoritative parents focus on the compatible discipline and set the limits along warmth and emotional support. Compared to Authoritative parents, Permissive parents are known as those who encourage the emotional closeness with children and give them freedom of action. As compared to Permissive Parents, Authoritarian parents are known well for high level of psychological control and stern discipline but they provide low support and demonstrate less emotional availability<sup>(4)</sup>. Parental acceptance is described by many of the aspects including warmth and responsive behavior along active listening, emotional and behavioral involvement in the life of a child and appraising them for their good actions<sup>(5)</sup>.

It is noted by Baumrind that there is difference between two dimensions of family educational style i.e. parental demandingness that is described as the demands of parents for mature and responsible behavior from their child and parental responsiveness that is described as the level to which parents respond to the needs of their child. Combination of these two educational styles dimensions is further categorized into four educational styles that are;

1. Authoritarian; parents in this style are more demanding and less responsiveness

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- (1) Papalia, D. E., Olds, S. W., & Feldman, R. D. *A child's world – Infancy through adolescence*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 11<sup>th</sup>: 2008AD).
  - (2) Louw, D., & Louw, A. *Child and adolescent development*. (South Africa: University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, 2007AD).
  - (3) Yaffe, Y. "Intergenerational transmission of parental authority in second generation of Holocaust survivors in Israel: A pilot study", *Journal of Educational Sciences & Psychology*, 7, No.1, (2017), 79–92.
  - (4) Baumrind, D. "Current practices of parental authority" *Developmental Psychology Monograph*, 4, (1971AD), 1–103
  - (5) Maccoby, E. E. "The role of parents in the socialization of children: An historical overview", *Developmental Psychology*, 28, (1992AD), 1006–1017

2. Permissiveness; parents are low demanding and more responsive
3. Authoritative; parents are high demanding and more responsive
4. Indifferent; parents are low demanding and less responsive<sup>(1)</sup>.

Parent with the permissive educational style shows a little interest towards understanding the child communication and don't give much importance to the emotions of a child. It is believed by the permissive parents that feelings of children are illogical and these parents are also known as dismissing parents and behave like they don't want to solve the problems of their children.

Discussing about the authoritarian parents who are also known as the disapproving parents, use this parenting style for lecturing the children disciplining or punishing them for their emotional expressions<sup>(2)</sup>

Authoritarian parents do believe that children use negative emotions to manipulate their communication/ideas and negative emotions do have bad effect on their character traits. The authoritarian scale is comprised of three aspects including physical coercion, verbal hostility and non-reasoning strategies. Uninvolved parents want to be permissive and don't set limits for children. These parents are also known as the Laissez-faire parents. These parents do offer little guidance to children but do not give proper attention towards the teaching of problem solving skills among children<sup>(3)</sup>.

Whereas an authoritative parent who is also known as an emotional coach utilizes the emotional moments at the time when listen to the child. Authoritarian parents do emphasize on the use of calm words of affection by helping the child for labeling the emotion and also guide for emotion regulation. The Authoritative scale is reviewed in three main aspects including warmth/support, regulation and autonomy granting.

There is a need for the culture acknowledgement within the parenting styles. As compared to eastern western individualistic societies aim to promote the democratic parental styles in last decades<sup>(4)</sup>. Also many of the Arab populations have classified that the authoritarian parenting styles

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  - (2) Ayers, H., & Prytys, G. *An A To Z practical guide to emotional and behavioural difficulties*. (London: David Fulton, 2002AD).
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  - (4) Campbell, J., & Gilmore, L. "Intergenerational continuities and discontinuities in parenting styles", *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 59, No.3, (2007AD), 140–150

keep cultural values and practices on priority in the family<sup>(1)</sup>. It is also found that 67.5% female students of a Saudi college have reported that they are physically punished for many times in their life<sup>(2)</sup>. So four types of parenting styles have been identified by many of the researchers and each style focuses on a different approach of growing up a child and can be classified with many of the characteristics.

### **Responsive Parenting**

Responsive parenting is also known as aspect of parenting style that is mostly defined as when parents try to understand the role of environment in the development of a child. It is shown from the research that this parenting style has a power to promote the natural developmental track of high-risk children including with low-income backgrounds and pre-mature births<sup>(3)</sup>. Compared to responsive parenting unresponsive parenting style is known as threatening the development of children specifically those who are at high risk developmental problems<sup>(4)</sup>.

Responsiveness is known as an aspect of supportive parenting that is defined in many of the researches as playing an important role in the provision of strong foundation for best child development<sup>(5)</sup>. Responsive parenting style is also critically highlighted in some of the recent researches by identifying the connection between early responsive parenting and larger hippocampal volumes for the development of pre-school children. In the preschool age the brain is linked with the best development of many psychosocial factors including stress reactivity<sup>(6)</sup>. Connection between early responsive parenting style and increased volume in the hippocampal region suggested that the time period of early

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  - (2) Achoui, M. "Taa'dib al atfal fi al wasat al a'ai'li: waqea' wa ittijahat (children disciplining within the family context: reality and attitudes)", *Al Tofoolah a Arabia*, 16, No.4, (2003AD), 9-38
  - (3) Newton, E.K., Laible, D., Carlo, G., Steele, J.S. & McGinley. Do sensitive parents foster kind children, or vice versa? Bidirectional influences between children's prosocial behavior and parental sensitivity. *Developmental Psychology*, 2014; 50:1808-1816. doi:10.1037/a0036495
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  - (5) Ainsworth M, Blehar M, Waters E, Wall S. *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the Strange Situation*. (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum; 1978AD).
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development is an important period to support the responsive parenting practices particularly in high risk family environment. These practices help to enhance the parent-child relationship for best social development.

In the infant-toddler years of a child development, many forms of the sensitive-responsiveness take place that are known as the foster attachment security<sup>(1)</sup>, and positive relations between the child and the parents. It encourages the cooperation, compliance and conscience development of the children<sup>(2)</sup>.

### **Responsive Behavior**

Responsive behaviors in the responsive parenting style encourage the mutual engagement and interdependency between parent-child relations. Responsive behaviors help children to learn the more actively and play an important role in the learning process<sup>(3)</sup>. Responsive support is parental scaffolding that engages the child actively in problem solving and also considered fundamental to support the development of self-regulation and executive function skill of a child<sup>(4)</sup>.

Implementation of problem solving, language and social-emotional skills by children is mostly supported by the parent-child interactions. It is also observed that the channel through which responsiveness supports the development of a child may be dependent on the parenting style across the development<sup>(5)</sup>.

Accepting the interests of a child with responses mostly supports the learning of a child by facilitating the development of mechanisms to deal with the stress and environment novelty. With the consistency of positive experiences a trust and relationship is developed between parent and child, and this relationship helps the child to generalize the learning in new situations for new experiences. This relationship will help the child to be

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  - (3) Goldberg WA, Clarke-Stewart KA, Rice JA, Dellis E., "Emotional energy as an explanatory construct for fathers' engagement with their infants", *Parenting Science and Practice*, 2, No.4, (2002AD), 379-408
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  - (5) Landry SH, Smith KE, Swank PR, Assel MA, Vellet S., "Does early responsive parenting have a special importance for children's development or is consistency across early childhood necessary?", *Developmental Psychology*, 37, No.3 (2001AD), 387-403

consistent with the learning activities and with parents' interests<sup>(1)</sup>. So, the parent's interest and acceptance increase with effective-emotional behaviors, promoting self-regulation and cooperation and other important behaviors for developing positive attitudes in the child.

During childhood and adolescence period of a child, parenting style proves critical in the psychological and behavioral nurturing of a child. Respecting the development of appropriate needs for autonomy is considered an important aspect in the western world. It is investigated by many of the researches that child with less supportive parenting style do face child negativity and difficulty<sup>(2)</sup> and with greater responsive parenting style children are emotionally positive, have good social behavior and social competencies<sup>(3)</sup>.

It has also been investigated that the psychological attributes of parents also affect the children development in the ways they manage to their children. A number of studies that investigated major personality characteristics found that higher levels extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience and lower levels of neuroticism were in relation with greater warmth and behavioral control, whereas higher levels of agreeableness and lower level of neuroticism were linked to support autonomy. These meta-analysis results were also in relation with the results of a meta-analysis of influence of parental psychological problems on parenting<sup>(4)</sup>.

### **Responsive Parenting in Islam**

Parenting concepts have strong roots in Islamic teaching which help in effective parenting; provide guidance to grow up their children in an effective way. According to Islamic teaching children are taught to do not differentiate between others but to respect others with their faith and do follow your own Islamic beliefs. These teachings will help children to be tolerant and peaceful in the society. Parent learning can be combined with the application of Islamic teachings for successful parenting.

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  - (2) Vygotsky L.S., *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*, (United Kingdom: Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1978AD).
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The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الرَّجُلُ عَلَى دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ، فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَحَدُكُمْ مَنْ يُخَالِلُ»<sup>(١)</sup>

*A person follows the way of his intimate friend;  
so let one of you see who his or her friends are.*

The compilers of the Hadith reported that Al-Aqra' bin Habis saw the Prophet, (ﷺ), kissing (his grandsons) Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn. He said:

«إِنَّ لِي عَشْرَةً مِنَ الْوَلَدِ مَا قَبَّلْتُ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا»<sup>(٢)</sup>

*I have ten children and I have never  
kissed any of them.*

The Prophet, (ﷺ), said to him:

«أَوْأَمَلِكُ لَكَ أَنْ نَزَعَ اللَّهُ مِنْ قَلْبِكَ الرَّحْمَةَ»<sup>(٣)</sup>

*What can I do for you if Allah has removed  
mercy from your heart?*

He (ﷺ) also said:

«يَسِّرُوا وَلَا تُعَسِّرُوا، وَبَشِّرُوا وَلَا تُنْفِرُوا»<sup>(٤)</sup>

*Facilitate things for the people (treat  
them in the most agreeable way); do not  
make things difficult for them; give  
them glad tidings and do not repulse  
them.*

### Social and emotional attachment through love and kindness

Developing mental and epistemological abilities among children in early childhood is considered one of the most important aspect of parenting. These abilities can be developed principally with the help of individual and group games either with family members or friends under the supervision of parents. It is reported that the Prophet (ﷺ), was once

- (1) Abū Dawūd, *Sunan*, Book of Good Manners, Chapter “Who a person is exhorted to sit with”, Ḥadīth No.4833, , 4/261. Narrated on the authority of Abū Ḥurayrah, May Allah Be Pleased With Him; Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, Book of Ascetics, Chapter 45 (untitled), Ḥadīth No.2378, 4/589, Narrated on the authority of Abū Ḥurayrah. Abū ‘Issa said: this Ḥadīth is hasan Ṣaḥīḥ (agreeable and authentic).
- (2) Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* The Book of Good Manners, Ḥadīth No.5997, (Dār Ṭauq Al-Najāh, 1422H), 7/8
- (3) Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, The Book of Good Manners, Chapter “Compassion towards the child, kissing it and embracing it”, Ḥadīth No.5997, 4/79. Narrated on the authority of Abū Ḥurayrah, May Allah Be Pleased With Him.; Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, Book of Righteousness, Chapter “What has been narrated about showing mercy to the child”, Ḥadīth No.1911, 4/318. Narrated on the authority of Abū Ḥurayrah. Abū ‘Isā said: this Ḥadīth is of the category of Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ (agreeable and authentic).
- (4) Ahmad Bin Hambal, *Musnad*, Ḥadīth No.365, 1/283, Narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās, May Allah Be Pleased With Them Both. Al-Bukhārī, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, 245/1320



praying when his grandson Al-Hasan mounted his back, prompting the Prophet to prolong his prostration. When the prayer was over, his companions asked him:

“Why did you prolong the prostration?”

The Messenger of Allah said:

«ارْتَحَلَنِي ابْنِي فَكَرِهْتُ أَنْ أُعْجِلَهُ»<sup>(١)</sup>

*My son mounted me, and I feared toppling him.*

In the early childhood stage children needs to be treated with kindness and sympathy at school. Allah's Messenger, (ﷺ), said to 'Ā'ishah:

«يَا عَائِشَةُ، ارْزُقِي فَإِنَّ الرِّفْقَ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي شَيْءٍ قَطُّ إِلَّا زَانَهُ، وَلَا تُرِعْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قَطُّ، إِلَّا شَانَهُ»<sup>(٢)</sup>

*O 'Ā'ishah! Kindness will invariably make things more beautiful while its lack will make them ugly.*

### Fairness from Parents

It has been emphasized in Islam to treat your children fairly. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), said,

«اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، وَاعْدِلُوا فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ»<sup>(٣)</sup>

*Fear God and treat your children fairly.*

«اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ»<sup>(٤)</sup>

*Be just: that is nearer to piety; and fear God.*

### Islam demands practicing parenting

It is commonly reported that most of the parents think that oral instructions about dos and don'ts are enough for effective upbringing of children. They judge that upbringing of children is only take care of the children and no need to do anything else for children upbringing. These types of parents do consider that in early childhood child is still an infant and cannot understand other things about upbringing. But the fact is that children do not wait whether their parents know about upbringing process or not or they want to take any initiatives or not. In the early childhood mind of a child is quite active and works like a camera which capture the

- (1) Abū Ya'ālā, Aḥmad bin Ali, *Musnad*, Musnad Anas bin Mālik, Ḥadīth No.3428,(Dimishq: Dar Al Māmūn, 1984AD),150/6
- (2) Abū Dawūd, *Sunan*, Kitab al Adab, Baab fi rifq, Ḥadīth No.4808, (Beruit: Al-Maktaba tul asariah,),255/4
- (3) Muslim bin Ḥajjaj, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Kitabul Hibaah, Baab Krahah-e-Tafzeel..., Ḥadīth No.1623, (Beruit: Dar Ihyā al turāth),1242/3
- (4) Surah Al-Mā'idah:8, Al-Bukhārī, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, 245/1320.

moments and situations happen in the environment. In the age of five or six a child has a certain character.

In fact a child is known as a mimicker who tries to copy the actions of parents and other things happen in the environment. Child shows a degree of respect for parents and tries to copy their life style. So it is necessary for parents to transform themselves from outside and inside and make their behavior like a role-model and avoid bad habits for effective parenting.

### **Islam Promotes Friendly Parenting**

Home is known as a nest for a child because he feels much attached with home. With friendly parenting, this nest would also remain a warm lap for a child and he will feel secure and safe in this nest. Raising the children in a satisfying environment and inculcating the good qualities and capabilities among children will truly result in a good citizen and human beings. At the same time if parents do fight for most of the time then child will also lose its calmness and will feel insecure and restless at home.

Those parents who argue and fight frequently at home ignore the feelings of their child. In such home environment child gets frightened thinks about why parents are behaving like this. These children become weak in feelings and have also don't have a good body. Most of the time they look heart-broken and like to spend their time in loneliness. Sometimes daughters of such parents have a firm impression that every man as rude as her father is and change their thought for marriage.

### **Care of Child in Mother's Womb**

A woman becomes a mother at the moment she gets pregnant and she takes the responsibility of the development of a child in her womb. It cannot be denied that germ of a father acts like a seed in the womb of a mother but the arrival of a child in the world depends on the mother. Welfare, illness, strength, weakness, looks and character all are decided in the womb of a mother and then these are established from the outside of a mothers' womb. It is said by Holy Prophet (ﷺ):

«إِنَّ مَا قَدَّ قُدِّرَ فِي الرَّحِمِ سَيَكُونُ»<sup>(1)</sup>

*The Fate, good or bad, of a person  
is decided when he is in the Womb  
of a mother.*

. The foundation of the child's morals and future success begin when he is in the mother's womb. The period of pregnancy is considered as the most beautiful life time of a woman. A careful mother tries her best to

(1) Nasā'ī, Ahmad bin Shu'ayb, *Sunan*, Kitab al-nikāh, Bāb al-'azal, Ḥadīth No.3328. (Ḥalab: Maktaba Al-maṭbū'āt Al-Islāmiyah, 1986AD),106/6

provide the good environment for harmonious development of the child in the womb.

### **Sense of belongingness**

From the beginning phase of life a child is influenced with the sense of belonging and wants this sense to be with him throughout his life. The child tries to adopt the morals and attitudes from his surroundings and later on the sense of belongingness helps child to make friends and play with them.

Parents need to support their child during all circumstances, even if they cannot perform a task for him just treat him in a gentle and caring manner. Do not try to criticize the child and don't threaten him for his mistakes by saying that you will leave him alone or go away from him. This kind of acts can affect the psychological development of a child.

### **Affection**

It is always under discussion that like nutrition child also needs love and affection or not. Children do not care whether they are living in a palace or a hut but they are only looking for love and affection from their companions. Feeling of love and care encourage children to move towards the path of growth and well-being. Feelings of love help child to be a good human being.

It is also proved from the psychological point of view that the children who get more love and affection from parents during early years have stronger cognitive and physical strength and control than those who may lack in love and affection from parents. Children who don't get proper love and affection can be a victim of inferiority and cause of anger, shameless, short temper and depression.

The Prophet of Islam said:

«أَكْرَمُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ وَأَحْسِنُوا أَدَبَهُمْ»<sup>(1)</sup>

*Respect your children and cultivate in them the best of manners.*

One person told to the Prophet:

“I have not kissed any child till today”

When that person left the company of the Prophet, he told to his companions,

«لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يَرْحَمْ صَغِيرَنَا وَيُقَرِّزْ كَبِيرَنَا»<sup>(2)</sup>

*A person who is not kind to children and not respectful to elders is not from amongst us.*

(1) Ibn Majah, *Sunan*, Kitāb al-Adab, Ḥadīth No.3671

(2) Tirmidhī, Muḥammad bin 'Īsā, *Sunan*, Abwab Al-birr waṣṣilah, Ḥadīth No. 1919,(Egypt: Maktabah Mustafā Al-bābī,1975AD),321/4

Children need love and care of the parents not only in words but also expect that parents should play with them and spend time with them. Children feel and think to be kissed and hugged by the parents with passion and emotions.

The Prophet of Islam has observed:

«أَخْبِرُهُ تَثْبُتِ الْمَوَدَّةُ بَيْنَكُمَا، إِنِّي أُحِبُّكَ فِي اللَّهِ»<sup>(١)</sup>

*Express your feelings to him, I like you for Allah. This expression of love brings you closer to each other.*

1. **Teach examples of Muslim Heroes:** Emphasize on the teaching of Muslim heroes' examples instead of batman or superman. Tell them about the history of Alī bin Abī Ṭālib and other famous Muslim heroes. Share with them the real sacrifices of Muslim heroes for a peaceful society.
2. **Allow children to sit with adults:** It is good for children to sit among the adults especially when they have Islamic talk. It is also practiced by the Prophet (ﷺ) that they preferred to put the children in front of the row when speaking about the Islam.
3. **Engage children in decision making:** It is very important to engage the children while discussing something about family matters. They will feel important which will help them to think more positively and logically and will take part for the well-being of family.
4. **Praise them:** Praise is one of the most important and powerful tool for children to make them feel especial. They feel a sense of pride if you praise them in front of others for their good actions. But do remember only praise them for good deeds not wrong.

Hazrat Anas bin Mālīk<sup>ra</sup>, a Companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَكْرَمُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ وَأَحْسِنُوا أَدَبَهُمْ»<sup>(٢)</sup>

*Respect your children and cultivate in them the best of manners.*

### **Play with your children as a child**

The Messenger of Allah, (ﷺ) said,

(1) Ahmad Bin Hambal, *Musnad*, Ḥadīth No:13535, (Mua'ssarah Al-Risālah, 2001AD), 169/21

(2) Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Kitāb al-Adab, Ḥadīth No.3671

«مَنْ كَانَ عِنْدَهُ الصَّبِيَّانَ فَلْيَتَصَابَلَهُ»<sup>(١)</sup>

*Whoever has or is around children  
should play with them as a child!*

Children always love to play with their parents so it is important for parents to spare some time daily from your routine to play with their children. Playing with children develop a sense of attachment and bonding with parents, they feel secure and special while playing with parents in front of others. Some of the years ago a toy company did a survey in which they asked a question from many of the five years old children i.e. what would they like for Christmas? And it was interesting to reveal that many of them want to spend time with their parents.

### **Love and Compassion for emotional satisfaction**

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

«أَحِبُّوا الصَّبِيَّانَ وَارْحَمُوهُنَّ وَإِذَا وَعَدْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا فَقُومُوا لَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُنَّ لَا يَذْرُونَكُمْ إِلَّا أَنْتُمْ تَرْزُقُونَهُنَّ»<sup>(٢)</sup>

*Have love for your children and show compassion towards them and when you promise them something, then live up to your promise since indeed they do not recognize you except as the one who sustains them.*

Kids always live in their emotions and when someone promised them to get something they get excited. They imagine the moment in their mind when the promised would be fulfilled. So do remember children never forget about whatever you promised them. It is advised to not make such kind of promises to children that you are unable to fulfill because it affects the emotional and psychological development of a child and they get isolated from surroundings.

### **Teaching Faith through Dialogue**

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

«بَادِرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالْحَدِيثِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَسْبِقَكُمْ إِلَيْهِمُ الْمُرْجَةُ»<sup>(٣)</sup>

*Acquaint your children with religious teachings (of Islam) before the disbelievers get to them.*

It is important for every Muslim to review your faith that how you worship keeping in mind your rituals and traditions. Parents must take care of their faith and beliefs because most of the time younger children are unable to understand the concepts of the faith but they prefer to develop

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- (1) Muhammad bin Ali, *Man la yahduruhul faqih*, (Beruit: Mua'ssasah Al-A'alm al almaṭbū'āt), 484/3
  - (2) Ṭabṛasī, Hassan bin Faḍal, *Makārim ul Akhlāq*, (Qum: Sharif Razi.), 252
  - (3) Al-Kulaynī, Muhammad bin Ya'qūb, *Al-Kāfi*, (Qum: Dar ul Ḥadīth), 47/6

their faith by words and actions of their companions and having exchange of talks with them.

It is equally important for every parent to inculcate Islamic teachings among children as soon as possible in younger age. Even a child does learn Islamic teachings when he is in the womb of a mother as parents recite the Holy Quran and listen the Islamic Teachings. The very first teaching of a child is considered when he comes in the world and parents recite Adhan and Iqamah in the right and left ear of a child.

The Prophet (ﷺ) once looked towards some young children and said:

«أَنَّهُ نَظَرَ إِلَى بَعْضِ الْأَطْفَالِ فَقَالَ وَيْلٌ لِّأَطْفَالِ آخِرِ الزَّمَانِ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ فَقِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مِنْ آبَائِهِمُ الْمُشْرِكِينَ. فَقَالَ لَا مِنْ آبَائِهِمُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَا يُعَلِّمُونَهُمْ شَيْئًا مِنَ الْفَرَائِضِ وَإِذَا تَعَلَّمُوا أَوْلَادَهُمْ مَنَعُوهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُمْ بِعَرَضٍ يَسِيرٍ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا فَأَنَا مِنْهُمْ بَرِيءٌ وَهُمْ مِنِّي بَرَاءٌ»<sup>(1)</sup>

*Woe be upon the children of the latter days from that which their fathers will do (to them)."* It was said, 'O Messenger of Allah! From their fathers who are polytheists? He replied, 'No! From their fathers who are believers however they do not teach them anything from the (religious) obligations and whatever they teach their children from the (transient) world, they only teach them that amount which will allow them to "get by" with ease. Indeed, I am not from them, nor are they from me.

This important statement teaches us to gain knowledge pertaining to this world and the hereafter. It clearly demands that parents should not only emphasize on spiritual side of the child personality but they are expected to give the child opportunity to seek knowledge of the universe and the society we live in. The parents are required to ensure imparting of religious education and worldly knowledge also.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Parenting style brings a significant change in the behavior of children. It is important for the parents to get necessary knowledge and training before parenting a child. Thinking process and nature of a child starts taking shape from birth, and foundation of its personality is laid down.

Various parenting styles reveal that warmth and responsiveness come from authoritative parents and they also expect manifestation of mature behavior. On the other hand, low responsiveness and coercive control are exhibited by parents with authoritarian parenting style.

Parents with authoritarian style express low warmth and acceptance for the child. They do not permit child's autonomy. Disciplinary strategies are

(1) Al-Tabraṣī, Mirzā Husayn bin Muhammad, *Mustadrik ul wasā'il*, (Mua'ssah Aal ulbayt Li Ihya itturāth), 165/1

frequently used with coercion such as verbal hostility, physical punishment and non-reasoning.

Parenting style in Islam includes Tarbiyya through responsible responsiveness and model actions demonstrating Islamic tenets in daily routine activities. It also adds kindness, care, love and attention towards the child's gestures. Islamic parenting express expectations from the children in term of doing the Permissible, obedience to the parents, respect to the elders and showing good moral behavior.

Islamic parenting also suggests that awareness of right and wrong should be developed in children. The children should learn and understand boundaries of Islam and of the society. Parents, teachers and the concerned guardians should be made aware of suitable ways of caring and upbringing of the children through educational programs. Guidelines about parenting in Islamic framework should be distributed among the parents of early graders. Discussion, dialogue and debate should be encouraged and promoted for positive parent-child relationship. Islamic parenting style does not allow any sort of psychological or physical abuse.

